

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4

2 INTRODUCED BY J. COHENOUR

3
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA OPPOSING THE RELAXATION OF MAIL DELIVERY STANDARDS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY
6 THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE; REQUESTING THAT THE
7 UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE MAINTAIN CURRENT LEVELS OF SERVICE; AND REQUESTING THAT
8 THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE MAINTAIN CURRENT OVERNIGHT DELIVERY STANDARDS AND
9 NOT CENTRALIZE MONTANA'S MAIL-SORTING OPERATIONS.

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11 WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service, founded in 1775, provides dependable, affordable mail
12 service to Montana communities; and

13 WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service remains an important part of the nation's economic
14 infrastructure through which nearly \$1 trillion of economic activity is conducted each year and in which 9 million
15 people are employed; and

16 WHEREAS, many Montanans, especially in rural areas, do not have easy access to the Internet or to
17 electronic banking and bill paying and are heavily dependent on the United States Postal Service for
18 communication and conducting business transactions; and

19 WHEREAS, Americans currently enjoy the most extensive postal service at the lowest postage rates of
20 any major industrialized nation in the world; and

21 WHEREAS, the President's Commission on the United States Postal Service has recommended changes
22 to postal operations that could sever postal employees from federal employee health, retirement, and workers'
23 compensation programs and has recommended repeal of laws that could pave the way toward reducing
24 rank-and-file wages and benefits while simultaneously eliminating the current salary cap on executive level postal
25 positions; and

26 WHEREAS, the Commission has recommended a new Presidentially appointed, corporate-style board
27 of directors and a new postal regulatory board and has proposed giving these new politically appointed governing
28 bodies broad authority to set rates; and

29 WHEREAS, the Commission has proposed to refine the scope of the United States Postal Service's
30 "universal service" obligation and uniform rate structure and change and restrict the scope of services currently

1 protected under postal monopoly regulations; and

2 WHEREAS, the new board's broad authority could allow post offices to be closed and prices to be set
3 with a complicated postage rate structure or could turn over postal operations to private, for-profit enterprises;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, replacing the United States Postal Service's public service obligation with a profit-seeking
6 mandate would undermine the United States Postal Service's historical "universal service" obligation and weaken
7 its national infrastructure; and

8 WHEREAS, in the interim period prior to legislated postal reform, the United States Postal Service may
9 move forward with initiatives to close postal facilities in Montana; and

10 WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service is requesting that the United States Postal Rate
11 Commission investigate relaxation of overnight delivery standards; and

12 WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service could consolidate the processing of mail in Montana,
13 including moving all Helena outgoing mail-sorting operations to Great Falls; and

14 WHEREAS, this consolidation would not serve the public's best interest because of the decrease in
15 productivity compared to the current processing of mail in Helena; and

16 WHEREAS, the consolidation could result in the elimination of the agency's current obligation to deliver
17 local mail overnight and could relax other mail delivery standards across Montana; and

18 WHEREAS, the economy of the Helena area would be negatively impacted as a result of the relaxation
19 of overnight delivery standards; and

20 WHEREAS, the public health and the public services provided by state agencies would be negatively
21 impacted as a result of the relaxation of overnight delivery standards.

22
23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
24 STATE OF MONTANA:

25 That the Montana Legislature urges the President, the Congress of the United States, and the United
26 States Postal Service to continue to maintain affordable, dependable mail service at current levels because of
27 its social and economic importance to our nation.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any recommendation from the President's Commission on the United
29 States Postal Service or the United States Postal Rate Commission that curtails public services in the current
30 postal service be rejected.

